

Proposed Merrill Field Landscaping Guidelines

Merrill Field Airport (MRI) has developed airport landscaping guidelines that enable airport tenants to create a long term compatible landscaping plan that engenders airport symmetry while complying with Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) code mandated requirements for MRI business landscapes. The intent of these guidelines is to provide a positive aesthetic environment to all airport users while accommodating airport safety considerations.

The three primary objectives for landscaping on Merrill Field are:

1. Preserving airfield object-free areas, to ensure aircraft freedom of movement and to prevent issues that would cause obstructions or visibility problems for pilots and/or other airfield operators.
2. Utilizing landscaping plants and materials that do not attract unwanted wildlife or present other hazards to aeronautical activity.
3. Creating a positive impression for visitors and customers, as well as attracting business, enhancing the workplace and improving the overall airport appearance.

With these considerations in mind, the following basic guidelines should be incorporated into the MRI landscaping planning process;

1. General landscaping Guidelines

- Non-AOA (Air Ops Area) areas within approximately 20 feet of any permanent structure should be landscaped if not paved. Landscaping includes one or more of the following: mowed grass maintained at a height less than 5 inches, shrubs or bushes, flowering plants, perennial ground cover, trees and/or decorative aggregate material and/or decorative bark (latter materials only in areas that will not be blown around by prop wash or wind).
- No landscaping in or on aprons or aircraft movement areas. (AC 150/5300-13A Airport Design, Chapter 5, 506.Taxiway/Object Clearance)
- Lessees are required to eliminate or control noxious weeds.
- Lessees are required to trim trees and bushes so as not to cause hazard to the public; or interfere with the public lighting or street lighting; not to interfere with or obstruct Line Of Sight views for security cameras; and remain at least 9 feet clear of above ground electrical, telephone, or other utility lines. No flowers, shrubs or trees shall be allowed to overhang or prevent the free use of any sidewalk or roadway, or street maintenance activity, except that deciduous trees may extend over the sidewalk when trunks/limbs are trimmed to a height of eight feet above the sidewalk, and 14 feet above a roadway. Symmetry/balance in such trimming should be maintained – i.e. not trimmed 8' on the sidewalk side and 14' on the street traffic overhang side. (ANSI A300)
- Lessees must treat or remove diseased trees or plants, and treat or remove any plant which creates a nuisance by virtue of being diseased or insect ridden or that creates any other applicable hazard. (ANSI A300)
- Lessees must remove any tree which has become dead or is in such a condition to be hazardous to the public. (MC 24.70.030 Removal of dead, hazardous or illegally located trees)

- No tree may be planted on a leased private property within two feet of any sidewalk or pavement. (MC 24.70.020 Responsibilities of abutting property owners; setback of trees from street or sidewalk)
- No tree, shrubs or flowers over two feet in height shall be planted or maintained in that portion of any planting strip lying within 35 feet of the intersection of the curb-line of any intersecting street. (MC 24.70.040 Maximum height of plants in parking strips at intersections)
- Trees planted at curves or near intersections must be trimmed so that they do not impede the line-of-sight required to safely scan for traffic.

2. Plant Types

Each new species of plant life introduced into the airport property should be reviewed to ensure that environmental conditions will allow growth and do not pose a safety threat by attracting unwanted wildlife.

The following guidelines apply when selecting plants for a landscaping project on MRI:

- No berry-bearing bird/wildlife attractant types. (MC 11.60.320 feeding or attracting birds. It is strictly prohibited to feed birds or use any object or device to attract birds on airport property)
- No high-height (>30' AGL mature height) trees. (See "Clear Zone Requirements &, FAR Part 77, subpart C, Section 21.65.040, FAR Part 77.11.A or as depicted on airport height map)
- No tree or bush types that produce seed pods or drips sap, such as cottonwood, mountain ash, etc.
- Plants should be tolerant to existing soil and moisture conditions as well as the climate and temperature of Anchorage.
- A mature tree configuration should be of a type that enables continued use of sidewalks and roadways without having to trim the tree base (i.e., mature conifer base circumferences should fit within site without needing trim-to-fit).
- Tree types should be fruitless or otherwise free of parts that fall and could damage vehicles, clog drains, or make pavement slippery.
- Bushes planted should have relative symmetry to site (low mature bush heights where line of sight around corners at an intersection is important; higher bushes where screening is desired).
- No trees with expansive root systems that will cause damage to the sewers, sidewalks or pavements. (MC 27.70.010 Prohibited Trees)
- Plants should also fit the site aesthetically and serve an intended function (such as shade, buffer, focal point, etc.).

3. Clear-zone Requirements

All landscaping plants and modifications are subject to the object-free areas and obstacle-free zones specified in the Airport Layout Plan and FAR Part 77: Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace. These include but are not limited to the following protected zones:

- 4600' x 500' centered on Runway 7-25 (Airport Layout Plan pg 4)
- 3120' x 500' centered on Runway 16-24 (ALP pg 4)
- 2480' x 250' centered on Runway 5-23 (ALP pg 4)
- No runway threshold penetrations (ALP pg 4)

- No above ground level (AGL) landscaping that penetrates Runway Approach Surfaces (ALP pgs 6-8) or taxiway edge margins, runway protection zones, object free areas, wingtip clearance areas, clearways and safety areas specified in the ALP.

(For further details please consult the Merrill Field Airport Layout Plan or contact the MRI Management Office or visit the site below in 'Additional Resources')

4. Landscaping Approval Procedure

1. Develop a site-specific draft landscaping plan for submittal to MRI Management, considering and incorporating the above guidelines, to include:
 - A. Types of plants/trees to be planted
 - B. Location around the site
 - C. Timeline for the planting/installation process
 - D. Name and contact info of responsible agent for landscaping maintenance
2. Obtain approval from MRI management
3. Submit site landscaping plan as part of building permit process (if applicable)
4. Provide copy of landscaping maintenance contract (if applicable) to MRI office
5. Schedule final inspection from MRI management

5. Additional Reference Resources

- For a catalogue of suggested plants for Alaska, see the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Alaska Chapter's website at (www.alaskaplants.org).
- ASLA Landscaping Plants for Alaska, University of Fairbanks Cooperative Publication (<http://www.alaskaplants.com>)
- Municipality of Anchorage Standards and Specifications (MAAS) Section 75.01 Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300 American National Standards for Tree Care Operations - Tree, Shrub and other Woody Plant Maintenance, Standard Practice
- American National Standards Institute Standard Z133 - Safety Requirements for Arboriculture
- Municipal Code (MC) 24.15.030 Landscaping Standards
- MC 24.70 Trees and Other Plants
- MC 21.65 Airport Height Zoning Requirements
- 14 CFR Part 77: Safe, Efficient Use and Preservation of Navigable Airspace; §77.17 Obstruction Standards, Civil Airport Imaginary Surfaces
- FAA AC 150/5370-10D, Standards for Specifying Construction of Airports, Part X - Turfing
- FAA AC 150/5190-7, Minimum Standards for Commercial Aeronautical Activities
- FAA AC 150/5300-13, Airport Design/Runway Protection Zone
- Merrill Field Airport Layout Plan (ALP): Runway Protection Zone Dimensions, Object Free Areas, Taxiway Dimensions/Object-free Areas/Safety Areas, Approach Surfaces (http://www.faa.gov/airports/alaskan/airports_resources/media/alps/ALP_Merrill_Field.pdf)